

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /155 W

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R 131325Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9044

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4547

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RH

SUBJECT: SMITH-MUZOREWA TALKS

REF: PRETORIA 3916

1. PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH AND BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA, LEADER OF AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (ANC), ARE REPORTED TO HAVE MET DECEMBER 12 IN ANOTHER OF THEIR SERIES OF "SECRET" MEETINGS BEGUN FOLLOWING MUZOREWA'S AUGUST APPROACH TO SMITH. CONTRADICTING REPORTED RUMORS IN SALISBURY OF POSSIBLE PRE-CHRISTMAS AGREEMENT, ANC PUBLICITY SECRETARY EDSON SITHOLE ISSUED DECEMBER 12 STATEMENT ACCUSING RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT OF TURNING TALKS INTO "MEANINGLESS EXERCISE". THIS VIEW GAINED SOME SUPPORT FROM PRIME MINISTER SMITH'S STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK THAT PROGRESS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH UNNAMED "REPRESENTATIVE AFRICAN GROUPS" HAD NOT BEEN RAPID.

2. SITHOLE CLAIMS GOVERNMENT WANTS SETTLEMENT "STRICTLY ON THEIR OWN TERMA" AND WARNED THAT BY CONTINUING TO
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NEGOTIATE, ANC LEADERSHIP MAY BECOME "MEANINGLESS LEADER-

SHIP." EMBASSY HAS REASON TO BELIEVE (REFTEL) THAT SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA DO NOT SEE EYE-TO-EYE ON POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT TERMS AND TACTICS AND THAT SITHOLE, ALONG WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF ANC EXECUTIVE, MAY NOT BE PRIVY TO DETAILS OF SMITH/MUZOREWA TALKS. IF THIS IS SO, SITHOLE'S STATEMENT COULD BE INTENDED AS WARNING TO MUZOREWA AS WELL AS SMITH.

3. COMMENT: APPARENTLY GOVERNMENT AND ANC CONTINUING TO NEGOTIATE ON BASIS OF 1971 SETTLEMENT TERMS. THIS INVOLVES SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSION BY ANC FROM ORIGINAL POSITION OF TOTAL REJECTION, AND MUZOREWA PROBABLY REQUIRES MORE SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS THAN SMITH SO FAR HAS BEEN WILLING OR ABLE TO AGREE TO.
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